

Rurouni Kenshin

—RESTORATION—

1

Story and Art by
Nobuhiro Watsuki

SHONENJUMP MANGA



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Rurouni Kenshin

— R E S T O R A T I O N —

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Calligraphy by Keita Amemiya



IMPERIALISM,
SHOGUNATE
SUPPORTERS,
EXCLUSIONISM,
OPENING THE
COUNTRY TO
THE REST OF
THE WORLD...

THE
BAKU-
MATSU
ERA...

A FIFTEEN
YEAR PERIOD
BETWEEN THE
ARRIVAL OF
THE BLACK
SHIPS AND
THE MEIJI
RESTORA-
TION.

IN THE
MIDST OF A
WHIRLWIND
OF
AMBITIONS
AND
IDEALS...

HITOKIRI BATTOSAI

...WAS A
SHISHI
KNOWN
AS...

...HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI.

...THOSE
WIELDING
SWORDS,
DIVIDED
BETWEEN...

IN KYOTO,
WHERE THAT
BATTLE
WAS THE
FIERCEST...

...THE
TOKUGAWA
SHOGUNATE
FORCES AND
THE ISHIN
SHISHI (PRO-
IMPERIALIST
PATRIOTS),
BATTLED EACH
OTHER.



PREPARE
TO DIE!!

HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU.

RYU AZEN!!

(DRAGON
SPIRAL
STRIKE)

TOO
STRONG
!!

HE'S
STRONG!!



...SAI!!

BA...

...TTO...

AAA...

RA...

CHAK

...AAA
!!

O
F



THIS
SENSA-
TION...

I
LIKE
IT...



HE'S
MINE.



STEP
ASIDE,
LIDO.

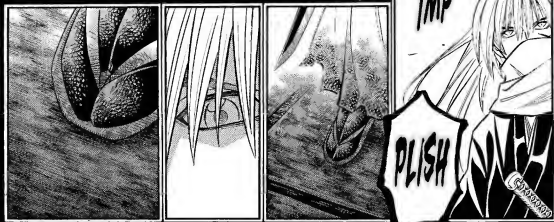


*SWORD: AKUSOKUZAN (SWIFT DEATH TO EVIL)

SAITO
HAJIME

SHINSEN-
[GUMI]
THIRD UNIT
CAPTAIN





WE CAN
CHANGE
LOCATIONS IF
YOU WANT.

WHAT'S
THE MATTER?
DOES THE
BLOOD BOTHER
YOU?

THIS IS
FINE.

NO...

...WILL
BE A
BLOODBATH.

THE
BAKUMATSU...



Rurouni Kenshin

—RESTORATION—

Act One: The Story Begins

A NEW
ADVENTURE
NOW
BEGINS...

AND
SO...

...THE
ERA OF
LIPHEAVAL
CAME TO
A CLOSE.



...IN THE
11TH YEAR
OF THE
MEIJI ERA.



...THE
DAYTIME
PROGRAM
OF THE
SWORD-
FIGHTING
PERFORMANCE!!

THE
GREAT
MERCHANT
TAKEDA
KANRYU
HOSTS...

THE
HEADLINE
MATCH
TO CLOSE
OUT THE
DAY! ON
THE WEST
SIDE...

...THE
LEGENDARY
HITOKIRI...

...HIMURA
BATTOSAI!!

...IS
HERE!
TODAY!!

BUT
THIS
ONE
IS...

C'MON,
GO!

THE
ULTIMATE
SWORDS-
MAN WHO
SLASHED
OPEN THE
MEIJI PERIOD
AS IF HE WAS
CARNAGE
ITSELF...

ORO?



THE
BEAUTIFUL
SWORDS-
WOMAN...

THE
OASIS
IN OUR
DESERT!

神谷 薫

KAMIYA
KAORU

...KAMIYA
KAORU!!

YOU
WERE
PAID IN
ADVANCE,
WEREN'T
YOU?
NOW GO
DO YOUR
JOB!

I
KNOW
THAT,
YOU
IDIOT!

THIS IS A
SHOW
AND
YOU'RE
AN
IMPOSTOR.

ORORO!

DO NK

ON THE
EAST
SIDE...

RAA AA AAA!!









WHAT KINDA
PERFORMANCE
WAS THAT,
IMPOSTOR!!

WHAT
KINDA
HITOKIRI
DOESN'T
DRAW HIS
SWORD?!

TO
HELL
WITH
THAT!



GIMME
BACK MY
MONEY!!

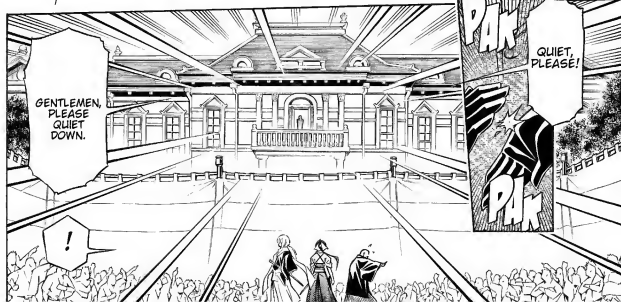
THAT
WAS
BOGUS!
IT WAS
FIXED!!

HOW COULD
A MEMBER OF
A FORMER
HIGH
RANKING
SAMURAI
FAMILY DO
THIS?!

...FOR
GAMBLING
?

GIMME
MY BET
BACK!!

SO THIS
WAS...



GENTLEMEN,
PLEASE
QUIET
DOWN.

PAK
QUIET,
PLEASE!
PAK





I CAN
APPRECIATE
YOUR WAYS.

WERE
YOU THAT
AFRAID
OF ME?!



TO RECRUIT
A HORRIBLY
WEAK
IMPOSTOR
TO EARN A
VICTORY AS
FAIT ACCOMPLI
IN FRONT OF
THE PUBLIC...

HOW
WISE
OF YOU,
MISS
KAORU.

WHAT?!



HOW-
EVER...



IT WAS
SO LIVELY, IT
APPEARED A
FESTIVAL WAS
BEING HELD.

THIS
ONE JUST
STROLLED
IN ON A
WHIM.

NO,
NO.

THIS
ONE JUST
WANDERED
IN HERE ON
MY OWN.



OH
WELL.

A
VICTORY
IS A
VICTORY.

ONLY
ONE MATCH
REMAINS
ON OUR
PROMISE.

I'M
LOOKING
FORWARD
TO IT, MISS
KAORU.



DID YOU
THINK YOU
COULD GET
YOURSELF
A FREE
DRINK OR
SOME-
THING...

...YOU
BEGGAR?



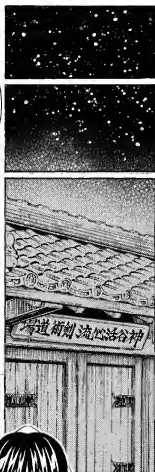
IT
APPEARS
THIS
ONE HAS
CAUSED
EVERY-
BODY
TROUBLE.
APOLO-
GIES.





KAMIYA
KASSHIN-
RYU?

IT'S
THE
SCHOOL OF
SWORDS-
MANSHIP
MY LATE
FATHER
DEVELOPED.
BUT
RIGHT
NOW, IT'S
ONLY ME.
THE
INSTRUC-
TOR.



...NOT
QUITE
IT.

THAT'S
...

PAK
OKAY,
YOU'RE
DONE.



I'M
NOT
DOING
IT FOR A
LIVING.

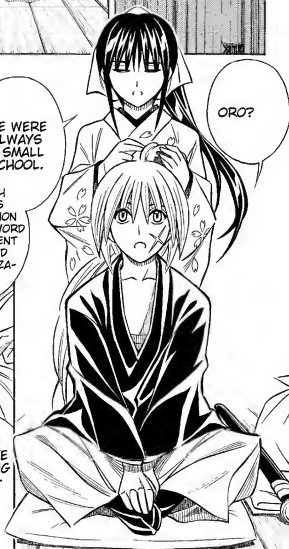
SHOO

RUB
RUB

WE WERE
ALWAYS
A SMALL
SCHOOL.

BUT WITH
ALL THIS
RESTORATION
AND THE SWORD
ABOLISHMENT
EDICT AND
WESTERNIZA-
TION...

AND SO
NOW YOU
PARTICIPATE
IN GAMBLING
PERFORMANCES?



ORO?



I AM
STARTING A
BUSINESS
HERE IN
TOWN.

HOW DO YOU
DO? MY NAME
IS TAKEDA
KANRYU,
THE GREAT
MERCHANT.

...SAVE THIS
DOJO, TO
SAVE KAMIYA
KASSHIN-
RYU.



I DO
IT TO...



...OR
PURCHASE THE
RIGHTS FROM
ME IN A SINGLE
PAYMENT.

EITHER YOU
PAY TWICE
THE RENT...

I'VE
PURCHASED
THE RIGHTS
TO IT.

THIS DOJO
IS ON
LEASED
PROPERTY,
IS IT
NOT?

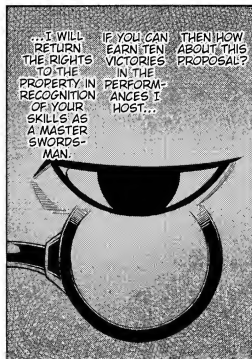


I
SHOULD
RUB
SOME
MORE
ON.

Woo! Woo!

OH,
MY.

IT'S
STILL A BIT
SWOLLEN.



...I WILL
RETURN
THE RIGHTS
TO THE
PROPERTY IN
RECOGNITION
OF YOUR
SKILLS AS
A MASTER
SWORDS-
MAN.

IF YOU CAN
EARN TEN
VICTORIES
IN THE PERFORM-
ANCES I
HOST...

THEN HOW
ABOUT THIS
PROPOSAL?



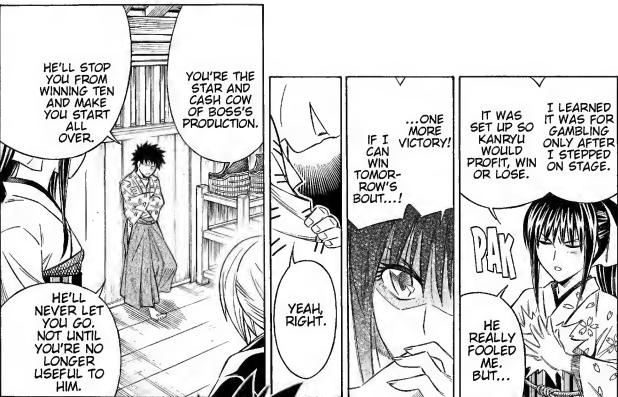
HONEST-
LY, I
COULDN'T
AFFORD
EITHER.
SO
THEN
HE...



ONE ON
SUCH AN
OUTSKIRT
...?

HE'S
AFTER
THIS
DOJO?

ONE SO
SHABBY
AND SO
TINY....!!





SURE
THING.

NO.
GRAB HIM
FOR ME.

FORGET
IT! I'M FINE!

I'LL RUB
SOME
OF MY
FAMILY'S
SPECIAL
OINTMENT
ON YOU.

COME
HERE.

HEY!
STOP!



YOU'RE
RIGHT.

I DON'T
KNOW.

BECAUSE
I'M...

...NOT
NOSY.



NOTHING
GOOD
WILL
COME OF
IT.

YOU CAN'T
KEEP
WORKING
FOR HIM.



YOU KNOW
NOTHING
ABOUT
ME OR MY
PAST.

SHUT
UP.



YOU'RE A
CHILD OF
THE NEW
MEIJI ERA.

SO EVEN
MORE
SO...

EVERYBODY
HAS ONE OR
TWO THINGS IN
THEIR PAST THEY'D
RATHER NOT
TALK ABOUT.

WHAT'S
IMPORTANT IS
HOW YOU'RE LIVING
IN THE PRESENT
AND HOW YOU MOVE
FORWARD TOWARD
THE FUTURE.



REMEMBER
TO GO TO
THE PRIVY
BEFORE
GOING
TO BED.
OTHER-
WISE
YOU'LL
WET THE...

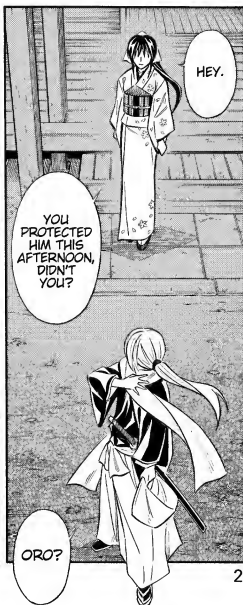
SHUT
UP!!

WORRY
ABOUT
YOURSELF
BEFORE
YOU WORRY
ABOUT
OTHERS!

I'M
GOING
TO
BED!

MIND
YOUR
OWN
BUSI-
NESS!

OKAY?







NOT THE
EVENING
PROGRAM
!!

I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
KINDA
FORMAT
IT IS...

I HEAR
NOBODY
COMES
BACK
ALIVE
FROM IT!!

...BUT
YOU
CAN'T!



BUT
THANKS
FOR
WORRYING
ABOUT
ME.

NO
MATTER
WHAT THE
BATTLE IS,
I WON'T
LOSE.

I WILL
WIN.

IT'S
ALL
RIGHT.





WHAT
DO YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
DOING,
KID?



I DON'T
NEED HIM
ANYMORE.
GO TOSS HIM
SOMEWHERE.

YESTERDAY'S
BLUNDER
AND NOW
THIS. YOU
REALLY ARE
USELESS.



WHO DO
YOU THINK
IS LETTING
YOU ENJOY
THIS NEW
ERA...

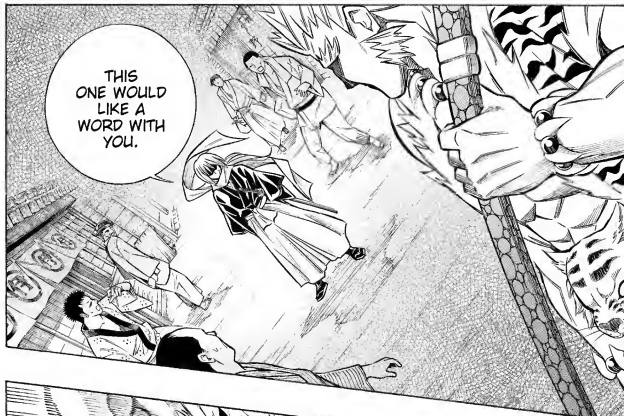
HM?



SIR,
PLEASE.
YOU
HAVE
TO
PAY.

HUH?! YOU
GONNA
MAKE
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI
PAY?

おじめ



THIS
ONE WOULD
LIKE A
WORD WITH
YOU.



NOT WITH
A FAKE
BATTOSAI
WHO CAN'T
EVEN
DRAW HIS
SWORD...

WELL I
WOULDN'T
!!

NOT
CAN'T...

THIS
ONE
JUST
PREFERS
NOT TO.

THUNK



TWIST

UNSHEATHING
IT TURNS ME
INTO...

SIMPLY
LAYING MY
HAND NEAR
THE GUARD
DOES THIS
TO ME.

...A
SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT
PERSON.

AND GOES
THROUGH
THE
TROUBLE
OF...

...OVER-
TAKING
A DOJO
ON THE
OUTSKIRTS
OF TOWN.

...HOLDS
A FIGHTING
PERFORMANCE
WHICH SHOULD
BE THE LAST
RESORT FOR
SAMURAI AND
SWORDSMEN
WHO FAILED TO
KEEP UP WITH
THE TIMES.

A MAN WHO
CALLS HIMSELF
THE GREAT
MERCHANT WITH
THE WEALTH TO
WRAP HIMSELF
IN WESTERN
CLOTHING
AND BUILD A
WESTERN-STYLE
MANSION...

TAKEDA
KANRYU...

AGH
!!

AND
WHAT IS
HE UP
TO?

WHO IS
HE...?

IT
DOESN'T
ADD UP.



KLANG KLANG

KLANG KLANG

ARE YOU IN TROUBLE?

TMP

YEAH...

...THIS
ONE
WILL
LEND
YOU A
HAND.

IF THIS
ONE WILL
DO...

CR
THIS IS THE BASEMENT FLOOR OF THE MANSION.

E
THERE ARE NO SPECTATORS.

E
THE MATCH WILL BE A WINNER-TAKE-ALL FORMAT.

E
THE PARTICIPANTS ARE YOU FOUR AND MYSELF...

WHAT IS THIS PLACE ?!

MUTTER

MUTTER

WHERE ARE THE SPECTATORS ... ?!

...THE EVENING PROGRAM OF THE SWORD-FIGHTING PERFORMANCE!

GREAT MERCHANT TAKEDA KANRYU BRINGS TO YOU...





...AN ARMS
DEALER OF
DEATH!!

TAKEDA KANRYU...
HE MADE A NAME
FOR HIMSELF
FEEDING OFF
THE BOSHIN AND
SEINAN WARS.
HIS REAL
IDENTITY IS...

MODERN
WEAPONS IN
OUTDATED
DOJOS ARE TOO
IMPROBABLE
FOR ANYBODY TO
NOTICE. THAT'S
HIS METHOD.

HE FIRST FINDS
HIMSELF A HUGE
MANSION AS
HIS BASE OF
OPERATIONS,
THEN TAKES OVER
DOJOS IN THE AREA
AND TURNS THEM
INTO WEAPONS
WAREHOUSES.

ZSH

BUT WHAT
HE'S
REALLY
AFTER
ARE THE
DOJOS.

GET HIM
BEFORE
HE GETS
US!!

YOU
BASTARD!
YOU WERE
NEVER GONNA
GIVE US A
CHANCE TO
WIN!!

**DAK
DAK
DAK**

...PLAY
!!

LET'S...

THE
FIGHTING
PERFORM-
ANCES ARE
JUST AN
ADDED
BONUS
FOR HIM.

IN
OTHER
WORDS...

...IT'S ALL
ABOUT HIS
PERSONAL
HOBBY.

DAK

**GA
U
U
U**

DAK DAK DAK DAK DAK

WHERE ARE
MY STRONG
AND SKILLED
SWORDSMEN
NOW?!

C'MON!
C'MON!
WHAT'S THE
MATTER?!

VNEE VNEE VNEE

DAK

WITH SO
LITTLE
MONEY
TO THEIR
NAMES!

YET THEY
STRUT
AROUND
WITH SUCH
ARRO-
GANCE!

I'VE
NEVER,
EVER
LIKED
THEM!

SAMURAI!
WAR-
RIORS!
SWORDS-
MEN!

DAK DAK

TO
HELL
WITH THE
CLASS
STRUC-
TURE!
BANZAI
TO EQUAL-
ITY!

AGH!

DAK



YOU
INSOLENT
LITTLE
WENCH!!



THAT'S
LORD
KANRYU
TO
YOU!!

KANRYU!!



HOW
PATHETIC.

HOW
MISER-
ABLE.



YOU ARE
A FREAK
SHOW
AND A
SUBJECT
OF
GAMBLING
DURING
THE DAY.

AT
NIGHT, YOU
NOT ONLY
CAN'T BEAT
YOUR ENEMY,
YOU CAN'T
EVEN
PROTECT
YOURSELF.



FU...





I'M SURE IT
WAS NOTHING
SHORT OF
EXTRAORDINARY.

UGH
...

UGH
...

THE YEARS
AND HARD
WORK YOU
WARRIORS
HAD TO
DEDICATE TO
THE SWORD.



IN THE
BLINK
OF AN
EYE!!

WITHOUT
MAKING ANY
SACRIFICES
!!!

BUT AS LONG
AS YOU
HAVE MONEY,
IT'S EASY
TO ACQUIRE
A POWER
GREATER
EVEN THAN
THAT!

MONEY!!!!

...THE
PROOF OF
POWER!!!!

IT IS
TRULY...



IS
THAT ALL
YOU HAVE
TO-

UGH!

...IS
POWERLESS
AGAINST IT!

EVEN
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI,
LAUDED
AS THE
GREATEST...

ALLOW
ME TO
LEND YOU
A HAND.

THIS
ONE IS
HERE AT
YAHIKO'S
REQUEST.

!

WHEN DID
HE GET
SO CLOSE
TO ME...?

I DIDN'T
SENSE HIS
PRESENCE
AT ALL...

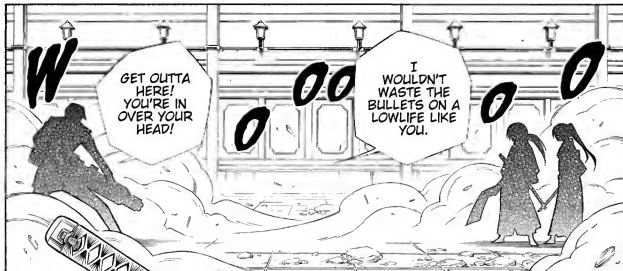
...IMPOS-
TOR.

WELL, IF
IT ISN'T
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI'S...

...IMPOS-
TOR'S...

IS THAT
ALL YOU
HAVE TO
SAY?

GR
RP



W

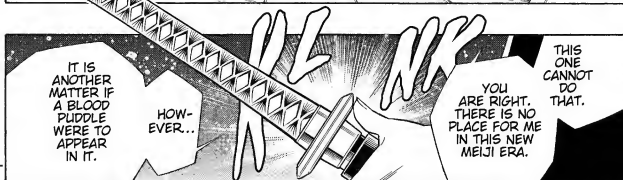
GET OUTTA
HERE!
YOU'RE IN
OVER YOUR
HEAD!

OO

I
WOULDN'T
WASTE THE
BULLETS ON A
LOWLIFE LIKE
YOU.

O

O



IT IS
ANOTHER
MATTER IF
A BLOOD
PUDDLE
WERE TO
APPEAR
IN IT.

HOW-
EVER...

NK

YOU
ARE RIGHT.
THERE IS NO
PLACE FOR ME
IN THIS NEW
MEIJI ERA.

THIS
ONE
CANNOT
DO THAT.

...OFF
THE
FACE
OF THE
EARTH!!

K

I'LL BLOW
THE BOTH OF
YOU...

THAT'S
LORD
KANRYU,
YOU
INSOLENT
BASTARD
!!

LIKE I
SAID!

TAKEDA
KANRYU
...

A POOL
OF BLOOD
WILL
APPEAR
AT YOUR
FEET.



HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU



GASP!

THEY
REALLY
VANISHED...

(DRAGON
HAMMER
STRIKE)



ABOVE
ME?!

...HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU, IS AN
STYLE BASED
ON EXTREME
SPEED.

HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI'S
SWORD
STYLE...

THE
ADVENTURE
...

...BEGAN
IN THE 11TH
YEAR OF THE
MEIJI ERA
IN TOKYO...

IT IS A
STYLE
THAT
BRINGS
DEATH...

IF IT
WEREN'T
FOR THIS
SAKABATO
WITH ITS
REVERSED
EDGE...

...IT'S A
STYLE
THAT
KILLS
WITHOUT
FAIL.

...THE
REAL
THING!!

THE
REAL...

...HITO-
KIRI...

SO
THE...

...IMPOS-
TOR'S
IMPOSTOR
WAS...

NO...

THIS
CAN'T
BE...



THIS ONE
WILL NO
LONGER
CREATE
POOLS OF
BLOOD.

THIS ONE
SWEARS
ON THIS
SWORD...



THIS
ONE
WILL NO
LONGER
CUT
ANYBODY
DOWN.

THIS
ONE IS
HIMURA
KENSIN.



THIS
ONE IS
JUST A
RUROUNI
ADRIFT
ON A
JOURNEY
NOW.

RUROUNI



HIMURA
KENSIN



...WHEN AN EX-
ASSASSIN AND A
GIRL DEDICATED
TO THE ART OF THE
SWORD MET EACH
OTHER.

AND
NOW...

WHY DO
YOU THINK
I SPENT
ALL MY
MONEY ON
YOU GUYS
IN THE
UNDER
WORLD?!

SHUT
UP!!

I'M
SURPRISED
THEY
RELEASED
YOU
FROM THE
DETENTION
HOUSE.

YOU USE
THAT
FAMOUS
POWER
OF MONEY
OF YOURS
AGAIN?

THAT
PUNK
AND
THAT
GIRL WILL
PAY!!

SO THIS
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI'S...

...STRONGER
THAN THE
POWER OF
MONEY,
HUH?

BANG

THAT
BASTARD
!!!

BANG

BANG

BANG
BANG
BANG

...A
PUDDLE OF
BLOOD...

HEH
HEH
HEH...

...IS
FATED TO
APPEAR
ONCE
AGAIN...

**KILL
HIM!!**

**GET RID
OF HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI!!!**





— R E S T O R A T I O N —

OR IS THIS
SOME
STUPID CODE
UNIQUE TO
WARRIORS?

ARE THEY
WORRIED
THEY'LL
LOSE A SLICE
OF THEIR
SHARE?

KLAK

FIVE.

WHY EVEN
BOTHR
DRAWING
STRAWS?
THEY
SHOULD
ALL JUST
GANG UP
ON HIM!

TWELVE.

KLAK

IRK

EIGHT.

FOUR-TEEN.

EIGHT-
EEN.

DON'T
TELL ME
I'M GOING
LAST!!

THIR-
TEEN.

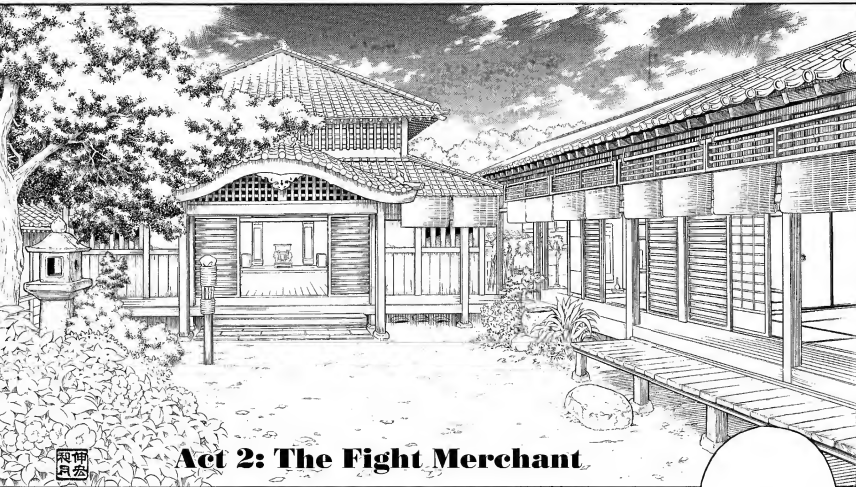
I LIKE
THE
NUMBER
ITSELF,
BUT...

HMPH...

SK

HEH
HEH
HEH...

Act 2: The Fight
Merchant



THANK
YOU FOR
THIS
MEAL.



GOOD,
IT'S
DECIDED!
NOW GO!

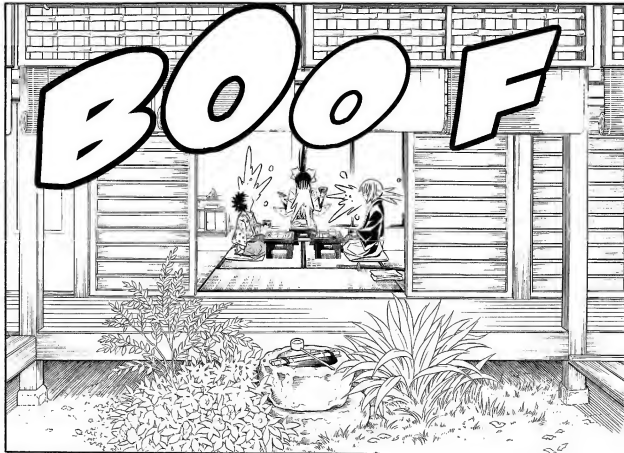
YES
!!

I'LL BE
FREE TO DO
WHATEVER
I WANT
ONCE HE'S
OUTTA THE
PICTURE!!

KILL
HIM!

KILL
HITOKIRI
BATTO-
SAI!!

I'M UP
FIRST!!



**YOU'RE
WASTING
YOUR
TIME!!**



**WHAT?! I
WANT TO
BE ABLE TO
COOK LIKE
EVERYBODY
ELSE!**



**WHAT
?!**

**THAT'S
STRANGE.**

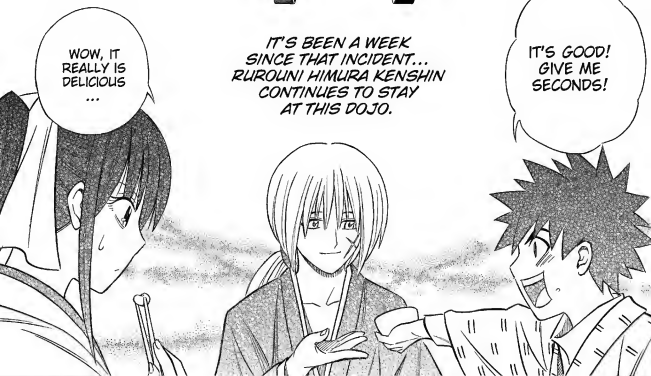
**I
THOUGHT
I
PREPARED
IT EXACTLY
THE WAY
KENSIN
TAUGHT
ME...**

**ALL YOU
KNOW
HOW TO
MAKE ARE
RICE BALLS!
STICK TO
THAT!**

**YOU
MADE
THIS?!**

GLO

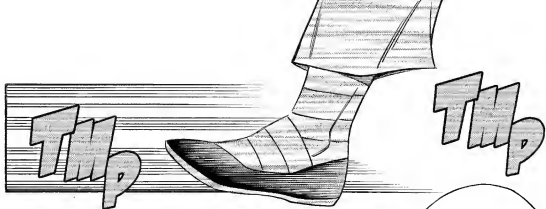
**KOFF
KOFF**





IN THE PAST, HE WAS LAIDED AS THE BAKUMATSU ERA'S GREATEST ASSASSIN, THE LEGENDARY HITOKIRI HIMURA BATTOSAI.

IT'S SOMEWHAT HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT THE TEMPERAMENT AND SWORDSMANSHIP HE SHOWED THE OTHER DAY IS THE UNDENIABLE TRUTH...



*SIGN: KAMIYA DOJO





BUT I'M
HERE
TO SEE
SOMEBODY.

SORRY TO
INTERRUPT
YOUR
BREAKFAST.

FWAP





DID HE
DECIDE TO
STAY HERE
BECAUSE
HE KNEW
THIS WOULD
HAPPEN....?



THE ERA MAY
CHANGE, BUT
THE BEHAVIOR
OF EVIL MEN
DOES NOT.



WHO
ARE
YOU?!

SOMEBODY
SENT BY
TAKEDA
KANRYU.



THAT'S
FUNNY. I GOT
NO BUSINESS
WITH YOU
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN.

MUNCH ...TO
KILL
US?!

DIDJA
COME
HERE...

MUNCH



DAMN
IT!!

WHAT IS
WRONG
WITH THAT
GUY?!!



I AIN'T A
KILLER.

DON'T
SPEAK
TO ME
LIKE
THAT.



GOOD, IT'S
DECIDED!
NOW GO!

KILL HIM!
KILL
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI!!



I'M HERE
FOR THE
BAKUMATSU!
GREATEST
SWORDSMAN.

FW

TPM



I'M
SAGARA
SANO-
SUKU!

THE SYMBOL
FOR "EVIL"
ON MY
BACK IS MY
CALLING
CARD!

SAGARA
SANOSUKE

I'M A FIGHT
MERCHANT
WHO TAKES
ON ALL
CHALLENGERS!

WHETHER
YOU DIE
OR NOT IS
A MATTER
OF LUCK!



...TO FIND
OUT WHO'S
STRONGER,
YOU OR ME!

I CAME
TO PICK A
FIGHT WITH
YOU...

HITOKIRI
BATTO-
SAI!

YOU
READY?!

WELL
THEN!



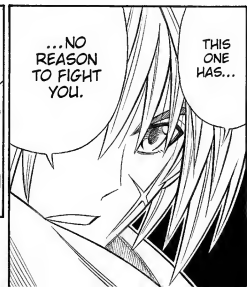
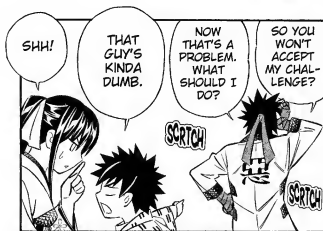
HERE IT
COMES!!

I
AIN'T
DONE
YET!









...YOU'LL
HAVE NO
CHOICE BUT
TO PROTECT
YOURSELF.

SLMP

BUT IF
YOU'RE
ATTACKED...

TAKE
A
LOOK
AT
THIS...

...SO
YOU
KNOW
I MEAN
BUSINESS.

EEK

IT'S
NEITHER
!

WHAT
I GOT
IS MY
SECRET
TECH-
NIQUE!!

HE'S
HIDING
THE
WEAPON
OR
EXPLO-
SIVES...

WATCH
OUT,
KEN-
SHIN!

...THAT
DE-
STROYED
THE
GATE!

MASTERY
OF TWO
LAYERS!!





I LEARNED
THIS FROM
A FALLEN
MONK I
MET IN
SHIMOSUWA
A LONG TIME
AGO.

SECRET
ART OF
DESTRUCTION...

THE
TWO-
LAYERS
STRIKE!

...A SECOND
STRIKE IS ADDED
TO TRANSFER THE
IMPACT COMPLETELY
INTO THE OBJECT
TO DESTROY IT. A
STRIKING TECHNIQUE
USING THE SECOND
AND THIRD JOINTS OF
THE HAND...

THE FIRST
STRIKE
OFFSETS THE
NATURAL
RESISTANCE
OF AN
OBJECT. AT
THAT EXACT
MOMENT...

A STRIKE
TECHNIQUE
ENHANCED
BY
MULTIPLE
HITS.



YOU TRULY
ARE THE
LEGENDARY
HITOKIRI.

THE
ISHIN
SHISHI'S
GREATEST
WARRIOR.

YOU'RE THE
FIRST PERSON
TO EVER
FIGURE OUT THE
SECRETS OF
THIS TECHNIQUE
WITH JUST ONE
LOOK.



ACCEPT
MY CHAL-
LENGE.

COME
ON...

I'M
BEGGING
YOU HERE.



WIN,
LOSE.

YEAH.

STRONG,
WEAK.

THE
WORLD OF
FIGHTING
IS SIMPLE.



YOU
ENJOY...

...FIGHT-
ING THAT
MUCH?





I DON'T
LIKE IT.

WHAT
YOU CLAIMED AND
WHAT YOU DID
WERE COMPLETELY
OPPOSITE. A
BIZARRE AND
INCOMPREHENSIBLE
MYSTERY.

THIS NEW
MEIJI ERA YOU
ISHIN SHISHI
CREATED IS
COMPLICATED.

YOU TOLD US
TO RESIST
WESTERNIZATION,
BUT NOW YOU
TELL US TO
ACCEPT IT.

I DON'T
WANT
TO TALK
ABOUT
IT TO AN
ISHIN
SHISHI.

BUT
THAT'S
NEITHER
HERE NOR
THERE.

YEAH.

THIS
CHARACTER
WAS
TURNED
UPSIDE
DOWN BY
THE MEIJI
GOVERN-
MENT.

...IS
REPRE-
SENTED IN
THAT "EVIL"
CHARACTER
ON YOUR
BACK?

SO
THAT
FEEL-
ING...

PA
DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
WHO I AM,
JUST PLEASE
ACCEPT MY
CHALLENGE!
K



I WOULDN'T
WANT IT
ANY OTHER
WAY!!

THAT'S
FINE BY
ME!

...I
CANNOT
HOLD
ANYTHING
BACK.

BUT
I'LL HAVE
YOU KNOW, I
BECOME A
SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT
PERSON WHEN
I DRAW MY
SWORD.
THEREFORE...

KEN...

...SHIN!

LET'S
MAKE
IT...

WELL
THEN!



THE MASTERY
OF TWO LAYERS
DESTROYS ALL! IT
TURNS ANYTHING
INTO DUST THE
MOMENT IT'S
STRUCK!!

...A
FAIR
FIGHT!!

YOUR
SWORD
IS
MINE!!

HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI!

...TWO
LAYERS!!

MASTERY
OF...



HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU

SORYUSEN!

(DOUBLE DRAGON STRIKE)





AREN'T
YOU
GOING
TO...

...FINISH
HIM
OFF?

HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI?

AREN'T
YOU
GOING
TO KILL
HIM?



YOU
ARE...





YOU DON'T
TAKE LIVES
ANYMORE...

I
SEE...

WHAT THE
HELL WAS
THAT...?!



KENSHIN,
WHO WAS
THAT...?



HEH
HEH
HEH...

...WE'LL
NEED
TO GIVE
YOU A
REASON
TO KILL.

BESIDES
A
REASON
TO FIGHT...



!!



I'LL DO
ONE THING
YOU WANT
ME TO DO.

I MADE A
PROMISE.



IF YOU WANT
ME TO TELL
YOU WHY I
WEAR THIS
CHARACTER,
I'LL TELL YOU.



IF YOU
WANT ME TO
QUIT BEING
A FIGHT
MERCHANT,
I'LL QUIT.



THIS ONE
HAS NO
INTENTION OF
MAKING YOU
DO ANYTHING
YOU DON'T
WISH TO.

CRUDE AND
UNREFINED, BUT
NOT A BAD MAN...
HE'S SIMPLY
LOST SIGHT OF
HOW TO USE HIS
STRENGTH...

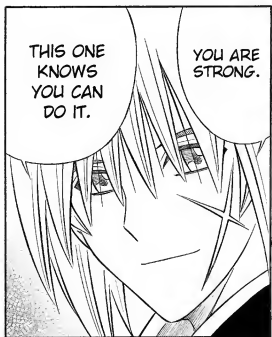
THAT
WON'T BE
NECESSARY.

SURE!

ASK ME
ANYTHING.



BUT
THERE
IS ONE
THING...



THIS ONE
KNOWS
YOU CAN
DO IT.

YOU ARE
STRONG.



BAM

ALL
RIGHT.

YOU
GOT IT!



SCRATCH

SCRATCH

WELL
I'LL BE
DARNED...



THAT
STRENGTH
OF
YOURS...

INSTEAD OF
DEVOTING IT
TO STREET
FIGHTING...

THIS ONE
WOULD LIKE
TO SEE YOU
USE IT TO
STOP THE
BLOODSHED
AND CRIES OF
PEOPLE.

HOLD
ON A
SECOND!

YOU
GONNA
STAY HERE
TOO?!

SH OOP

TO START OFF,
I'LL HELP YOU
PROTECT THIS
DOJO!!

ORORO.

I CAN'T
AFFORD TO FEED
THE THREE OF
YOU!

THIS
PLACE'LL GO
BROKE EVEN
WITHOUT
KANRYU'S
HELP!

THAT'S RIGHT!
ALL I ASK
IS THREE
SQUARES AND
A NAP!

*SWORD: AKUSOKUZAN
(SWIFT DEATH TO EVIL)

FOOLS...

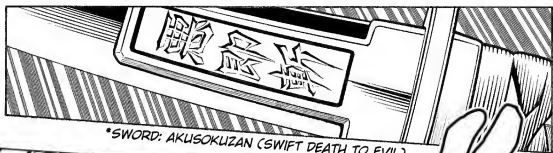
VEE

HMPH...

EN



— R E S T O R A T I O N —



Act 3: Whereabouts of Justice (Part 1)

CHOSHUHA
ISHIN
SHISHI

SHINSEN-
GUMI
3RD UNIT
CAPTAIN

HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI

SAITO
HAJIME



HMM?



THAT
TECH-
NIQUE
MUST
BE...

GATOTSU.



ACCURATE
ENOUGH
TO PIERCE
A BULLET.

POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO
SHATTER A
CANNONBALL,
FROM WHAT
I HEARD.

AN
EXTRAORDINARY
ONE-ARM
SWORD THRUST
USED BY THE
SHINSENGUMI
3RD UNIT
CAPTAIN.

IT IS
FASTER
THAN AN
ARROW.



ZWOOSH

GR P

GR P

...IMPOS-
SIBLE TO
ESCAPE THIS
TECHNIQUE
AT CLOSE
RANGE!!

THEN
YOU
SHOULD
ALSO
KNOW
THAT IT
IS...

YOU
SEEM TO
KNOW
ALL
ABOUT
IT.

RAAA!!

SHAK

WE'LL
SEE.

CHAK

WO

!!

OSH

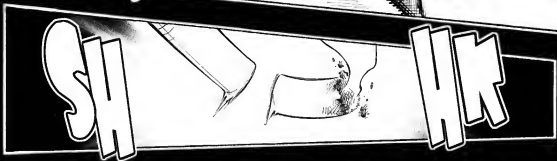
YOUR
TRICKS
WON'T
WORK
ON
ME!!!

GATOTSU
!!











**RYU-
SHOSEN!!**

(RISING DRAGON
FLASH)

**HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU...**



**THAT
HURT!**



I'M
SURPRISED
YOU WERE
ABLE TO
MAKE IT OUT
IN ALL THAT
ACTION.

THIS?

IT'S
INSCRIBED
ON YOUR
SWORD.

IS IT THE
SHINSEN-
GUMI'S
MOTTO?

!



MY
JUSTICE
IS NOT
ABOUT
SLAYING.

YOU'RE A KILLER
AND I'M A
MEMBER OF THE
SHINSENGUMI,
BUT ONE THING
WE DO SHARE IS
THAT SENSE OF
JUSTICE.

THAT IS WHY
WE'RE
CROSSING
OUR
SWORDS.

"SWIFT
DEATH
TO EVIL."

AKUSOKU-
ZAN.

IT IS
THE ONLY
JUSTICE I
BELIEVE IN.



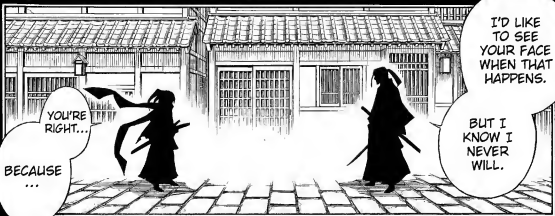
I
WANT TO
PROTECT
THE
PEOPLE...

MY
JUSTICE
IS ABOUT
PROTECTING!

...AND LIVE
WITH THEM
IN THIS NEW
ERA!

HOW
NAIVE.

HEH

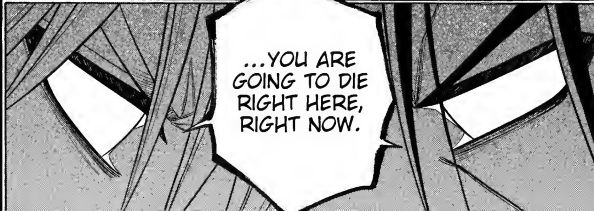


YOU'RE
RIGHT...

BECAUSE
...

I'D LIKE
TO SEE
YOUR FACE
WHEN THAT
HAPPENS.

BUT I
KNOW I
NEVER
WILL.



...YOU ARE
GOING TO DIE
RIGHT HERE,
RIGHT NOW.



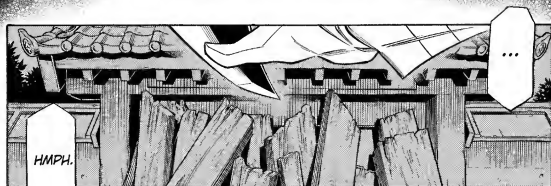
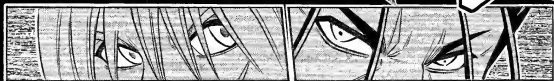
**SHINSENGUMI
3RD UNIT
CAPTAIN
ULTIMATE
TECHNIQUE**

**GATOTSU
ZEROSHIKI!!!!**

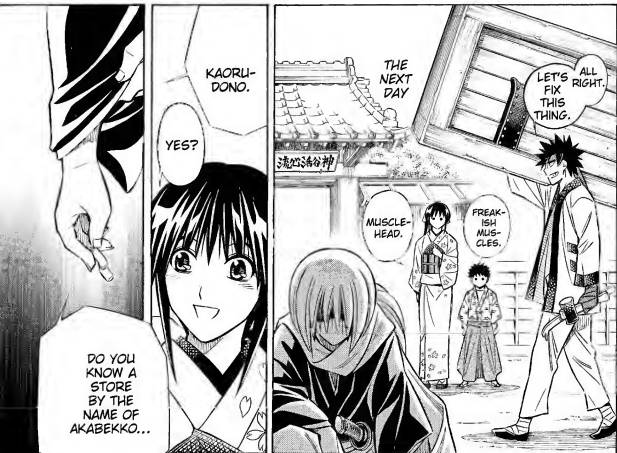


**HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU
FASTEST
BATTOJUTSU
TENSHO
RYUSEN!!!**

**(HEAVENLY DRAGON
FLASH)**



...HAS
CHANGED.



Rurouni
Kenshin

—RESTORATION—

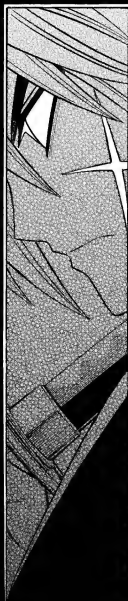


Rurouni Kenshin

—RESTORATION—

Act Zero: The Prologue





THIS
ADVENTURE
BEGINS IN
THE 11TH
YEAR OF THE
MEIJI ERA.



HE SLAYED
MEN AS IF HE
WAS CARNAGE
INCARNATE, AND
WITH HIS BLOOD-
SOAKED SWORD
HE SLASHED
OPEN THE
MEIJI ERA.

AT THE
CONCLUSION
OF THOSE
TURBULENT
TIMES, HE
DISAPPEARED,
LEAVING ONLY
HIS LEGEND
BEHIND.

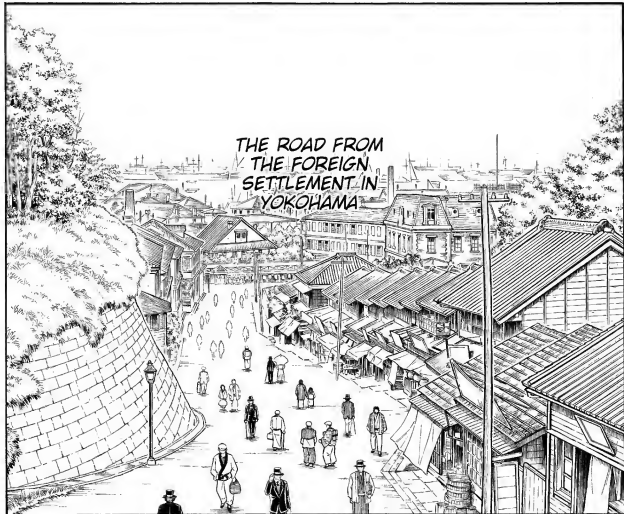
LONG AGO,
DURING A
TURBULENT
TIME IN KYOTO...



...THERE
WAS A
PATRIOT
KNOWN AS
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI.



THE ROAD FROM
THE FOREIGN
SETTLEMENT IN
YOKOHAMA



ORO?



OUTTA
MY
WAY!

OUTTA
MY
WAY!

KLAK

KLAK



RURO
...

A
WANDER-
ING
SWORDS-
MAN, A
KENKAKU.

A KEN-
KAKU...
WAIT, SO
YOU'RE
A...

HIMURA
KENSIN.

THIS
ONE IS A
RUROUNI.

...SAML-
RAI?!

THAT'S
AGAINST THE
HAITOREI*!

ORO...

TWITCH

THAT'S A
KATANA!

*A LAW ENACTED IN THE NINTH YEAR OF THE MEIJI ERA, BANNING
THE CARRYING OF WEAPONS IN PUBLIC

THAT'S
RIGHT! I
GOTTA GET
GOING!

OH!

THERE HE IS!
OVER HERE,
RICKSHAWMAN!

IT IS
INDEED A
KATANA,
BUT...

...THIS
KATANA
IS...

ORORO?



SO I
BROUGHT
HIM ON
MY BEST
RICKSHAW!

I KNEW
THERE WAS
NO TIME TO
WASTE!



DOCTOR!



HURRY,
GET HER
TO A
DOCTOR!

SOB

SHE
APPEARS
TO HAVE
FALLEN
ILL.

SOB

HUSTLE

BUSTLE

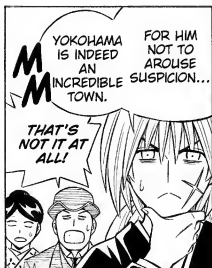


DO NOT
WORRY.

BFF!

YOU HAVE
NO NEED
TO BE
SUSPICIOUS
OF ME.







YOU
GOT
IT!

I MUST
PREPARE A
PRESCRIPTION.

YO!

DANKICHI-
SAN.

PLEASE TAKE
THIS LADY
TO MY HOTEL
ROOM.



I'M ON
IT...



OW...
WHAT THE
HECK...?

GET OUTTA
MY WAY!!

OUTTA
THE WAY,
OUTTA
THE
WAY!



YOU'RE
...





THE
MYSTERIOUS
WANDERING
WESTERN
DOCTOR.

SO IT'S
YOU
AGAIN.

ZOOM



HOW
DARE YOU
PRACTICE
MEDICINE
WITHOUT
PERMISSION
RIGHT
UNDER MY
NOSE?!

I
CANNOT
ALLOW
THIS!

IT'S
ISHIZU
DEIAN!



DR. ELDER
TAKES
CARE OF
US WHO
CAN'T
PAY!

SO
THIS IS
NO SKIN
OFF YOUR
BACK!

THOSE
WHO
CANNOT
PAY SHALL
NOT LIVE.

AND
WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH THAT?

THE ONLY
PEOPLE HE
TREATS ARE
BIG-SHOT
WESTERNERS
AND THE
RICH.

WHAT
PERMIS-
SION?

...IT WILL
DEVALUE
OUR
SKILLS
AS
WELL.

IF WE ALLOW
SOMEONE TO
EXERCISE
THAT SKILL
PRACTICALLY
FOR FREE...

THE COST
OF WESTERN MEDICINE
ESPECIALLY HAS BEEN
RISING SINCE IT WAS
INTRODUCED
AT THE START OF
THE MEIJI ERA.

THE
PRACTICE OF
MEDICINE IS
AN EXPENSIVE
SKILL.

THAT IS
EXACTLY
WHY I
CAN'T
ALLOW
IT.

IF YOU
DO...!

PANT

PANT
PANT

DO NOT
TREAT
HER.

IT'S THE
SICK
WOMAN
WE'LL LAY
A HAND
ON!

YOU WILL
BRING
HARM TO
ME?

DON'T BE
RIDICULOUS.
LAYING A
HAND ON A
FOREIGNER
HERE IN THE
SETTLEMENT
IS THE
GREATEST
TABOO.

IF THE PATIENT
IS BEYOND
HELP, YOU
HAVE NO
REASON TO
TREAT HER!

MAMA
!!



THE LADY'S
WELL-BEING
IS THE MAIN
CONCERN
RIGHT NOW.

STOP IT
RIGHT
THERE,
BOTH OF
YOU.



STAY
OUTTA
THIS!



THAT'S
AGAINST
THE
HAITOREI!

A K-K-
KATANA
!!

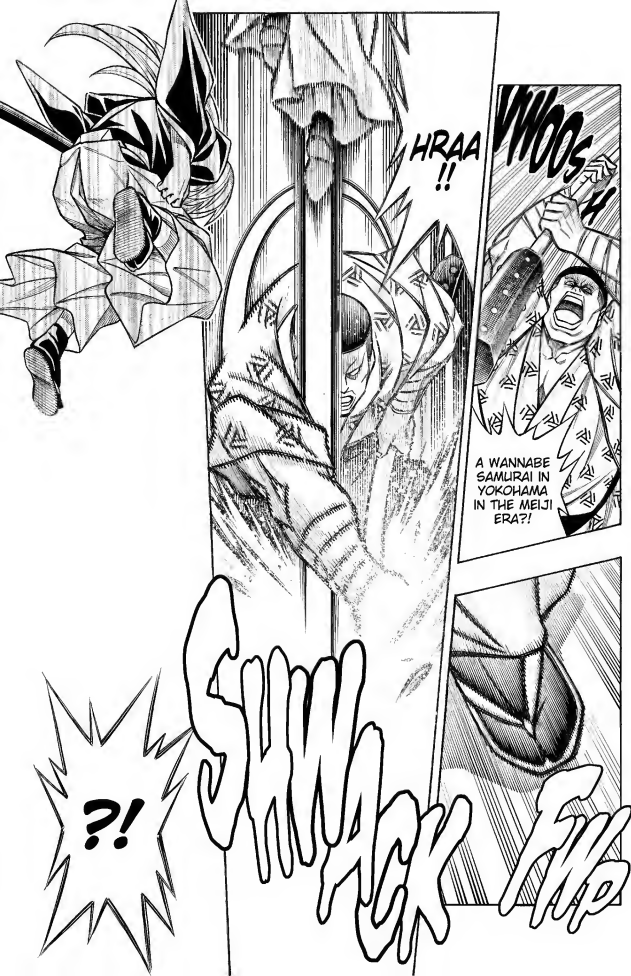
LIKE
YOU'RE
ONE TO
TALK.



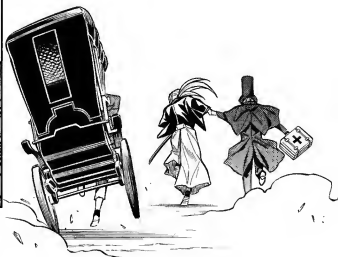
OR I'LL
TAKE
YOUR EYE
OUT WITH
THIS—



?!







IT'S BEST
SHE GETS
SOME REST
UNTIL SHE
FEELS
BETTER.

I BOOKED
ANOTHER
ROOM.



HE ABSOLUTELY
WOULDN'T ACCEPT
PAYMENT, SAYING I
COULDN'T EARN
TILL I HEALED.

ON TOP OF
THAT, AFTER I GOT
BETTER, HE'D GO
OUT OF HIS WAY TO
HIRE ME SO I COULD
MAKE SOME MONEY.



HE DID
THE SAME
FOR ME
WHEN I
BROKE
MY LEG.

HE WENT
ABOVE AND
BEYOND THE
CALL OF A
NORMAL
DOCTOR.



RUROUNI-
SAN, NEED
A LIFT?



THANK
YOU SO
MUCH,
DANKICHI-
SAN.

WELL,
I BETTER
GET
GOING.
NO,
NO, NOT
AT ALL.

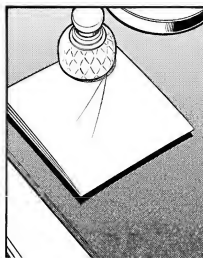
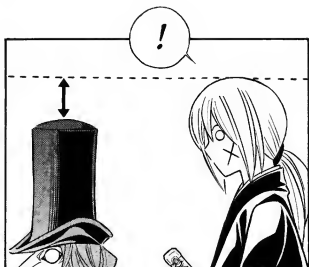
GOES OUT
OF HIS WAY
TO TREAT
THOSE IN
NEED.

ASKS
NOTHING
FROM
THOSE
WHO
CAN'T
PAY.



THAT'S
WHAT KIND
OF PERSON
HE IS.





IT'S
JUST
YOUR
IMAGINA-
TION.

APOLOGIES.
YOU ARE A
LADY.

WESTERN-
ERS
SOMETIMES
CHANGE
SEXES.

ECH

OH,
NO...

I'M SORRY.
THAT'S A
LIE.

...

A FEW HOURS EARLIER

...WHILE
TRAVELING ALL
OVER THE WORLD
AT THE REQUEST
OF PROMINENT
AND WEALTHY
PEOPLE...

HE TREATS
THE POOR AND
INJURED...

HE
ALWAYS HIDES
HIS FACE WITH
A MASK, SO HIS
IDENTITY IS A
MYSTERY. BUT HE
IS A FIRST-CLASS
DOCTOR.

DR.
ELDER.

UHM HMM. THIS
IS MY TERRITORY. I NEED
TO MAKE AN EXAMPLE
OF HIM SO OTHERS DON'T
TRY TO FOLLOW IN
HIS FOOTSTEPS.

AND SO YOU
WANT TO GET
RID OF THIS DR.
ELDER.

HOWEVER...

DR. ELDER
ALSO HAS A
BODYGUARD
NONE OF MY
MEN STANDS
A CHANCE
AGAINST.

AND NOT
ONLY THAT...

...IF
ANYBODY
FINDS OUT
A NATIVE
WAS
INVOLVED,
IT WILL
MEAN
TROUBLE.

A NO-
GOOD
SAMURAI
WITH A...

...CROSS-
SHAPED
SCAR ON
HIS LEFT
CHEEK.

I SEE. SO THAT IS
WHY YOU WANT TO
BORROW HIM.

RA

AAA

HE COMES
FROM A
LONG LINE OF
ASSASSINS
STRETCHING
BACK TO THE
MIDDLE AGES!

IT'LL COST
YOU.
CAN YOU
AFFORD
HIM?!!

GASP!

MM!!

K'RUUK

HMM...
WELL, FINE.

IF I RELEASE
THIS IN THE
POPULACE,
THERE'LL BE
NO END TO MY
PATIENTS, OR
HOW MUCH I
CAN MAKE.

SWIG SWIG

TIME TO GO
TO WORK.

ESPIRAL.

HMPH. I'M A
DOCTOR FOR
CRYING OUT
LOUD.



THE
SMALLPOX
VIRUS.

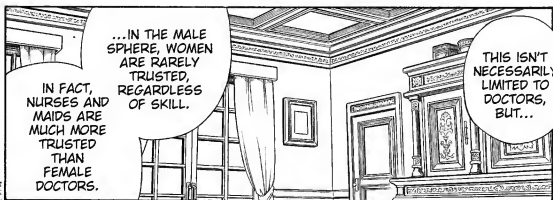
KLUNK



I'VE HEARD
OF HIM...

SAMURAI WITH A
CROSS-SHAPED
SCAR.

HEH



IN FACT,
NURSES AND
MAIDS ARE
MUCH MORE
TRUSTED
THAN
FEMALE
DOCTORS.

...IN THE MALE
SPHERE, WOMEN
ARE RARELY
TRUSTED,
REGARDLESS
OF SKILL.

THIS ISN'T
NECESSARILY
LIMITED TO
DOCTORS,
BUT...



CHANGE
MY VOICE
AND
MANNERISMS
...

...I
WEAR
ELEVATED
SHOES
AND A
TALL HAT.

THAT'S
WHY...

...AND
PUT ON A
MASK.



YES.

IT'S A
FACT OF
LIFE, 19TH
CENTURY
OR NOT.

SO IT'S
THE
SAME
IN THE
WEST.

MY MOST
PROFOUND
APOLOGIES.

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA

I DON'T HAVE
MUCH OF A
FIGURE SO I
DIDN'T HAVE TO
DISGUISE MY
BODY...

...TO HEAR
THAT.

THIS
ONE...
...IS
VERY
SORRY...

"IT'S
PROBABLY
BEST NOT
TO GET
INVOLVED."

"IS HE
REALLY A
DOCTOR?"

"MASK."
"A
COMPLETE
MYSTERY."

"CAN WE REALLY
TRUST A DOCTOR
WHO WE KNOW
NOTHING ABOUT,
NOT EVEN HIS
FACE'?"

YES.

...

...THERE IS
A WORLD
WHERE
EVERYBODY
CAN LIVE
A HEALTHY
LIFE.

...BEYOND
THIS
MASK...

I CHOSE
THIS LIFE
BECAUSE...

BUT IT'S
OKAY.





"NO."

"THEN LET ME
ASK, HAVE
YOU KILLED
ANYBODY WITH
THIS HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU?"

"HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU"...

"THE ULTIMATE
AND FASTEST
ANCIENT
SWORD
STYLE THAT
REVOLVES
AROUND
SWIFTNESS."



"...DO YOU
THINK YOU
CAN?"

"THEN..."



CLANG

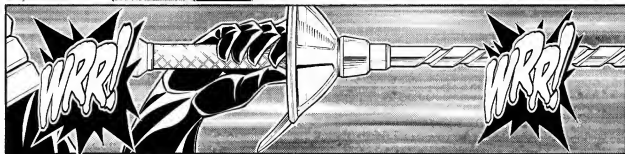
"I'D HEARD
OF IT, BUT I
DIDN'T
BELIEVE IT
ACTUALLY
EXISTED..."

"...EXISTS
A NEW AGE
WHERE
EVERYBODY
CAN LIVE
SAFELY..."

"IF BEYOND THIS
BLOOD-SOAKED
SWORD OF MINE
AND THE LIVES
SACRIFICED..."









**TORMENTA
INFIERNO!!**

(HELL
STORM)

!!!

ZWEEEEEE

WH...

**KRA AHC
K**

...OAH!



WO OO



WHERE
IS THE
SAMURAI?



HUH?

...LEFT FOR
ELDER-DONO
TRANSLATED.

IT TOOK
LONGER THAN
EXPECTED
TO GET THE
MESSAGE...

LET
HER GO.

THE
EASTERN
SWORDS-
MAN AND
BERSERK-
ER.

SAMURAI...
THAT NAME
IS KNOWN
IN FAR
AWAY LANDS
ACROSS
THE SEA.

A CROSS-
SHAPED
SCAR.

A
SAMURAI.

RUROUNI...

NOT JUST ANY
SAMURAI, BUT
THE SAMURAI
WITH THE
CROSS-SHAPED
SCAR!

AND I
HAVE
FINALLY
MET ONE!

I KNOW
THEY
DISAPPEARED
WITH THE
MEIJI
REVOLUTION
TEN YEARS
AGO.

**HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI!!**

**THE
LEGENDARY
SAMURAI,
CONSIDERED
TO BE THE
ULTIMATE!!**

...THAT A
FEW HAD
SURVIVED.

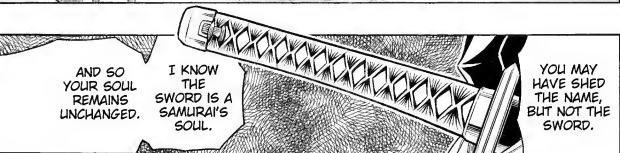
BUT I
CAME TO
THIS
ISLAND
BETTING...



**BATTO-
SAI!!!**



**HITO-
KIRI?!**



...THIS ONE WILL
SHOW YOU MY
SWORD, FOR AN
INSTANT.

IF THAT IS
WHAT YOU
WISH...



HERE
I
COME!





**TEMPESTAR
INFIERNO!!!**

(HELL TEMPEST)

TAKE MY
ULTIMATE
AND
FASTEST!!

THIS SABER HAS BEEN
IMPROVED TO BETTER
TAKE LIVES, AND MY
RIGHT ARM HAS BEEN
TRAINED TO THE LIMIT!

HITEN



THAT
WAS
FAST.

BUT...

...NOT
FAST
ENOUGH.



**MITSURUGI-
RYŪ!!**

SLASH

RYUTSUISEN!!!!

(DRAGON Mallet FLASH)

WACK





LOOK
CLOSELY
AT THE
SWORD THIS
ONE NOW
CARRIES.

PLEASE.



SLICED
IN
TWO!!



...UNLESS IT'S
PERFORMED BY A
SWORD DESIGNED
NOT TO TAKE
LIVES...

MY HITEN
MITSURUGI-RYU
IS A STYLE THAT
TAKES LIVES WITH
CERTAINTY...



THEN
SUFFER
THIS!!

HE'S
IN A
DIFFERENT
CLASS
THAN
US...

CURSES!

FLIP

TH...

THANK

FL

Op

GOD.



THAT'S A
RELIEF.

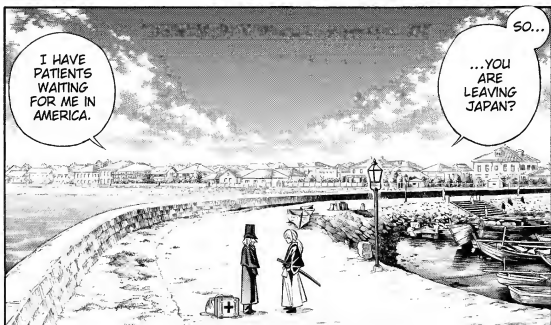
THE
ASSASSIN
AND BROKER
WILL BE
PUNISHED
IN THEIR
RESPECTIVE
COUNTRIES.

ISHIZU
DE'IAN
HAS BEEN
ARRESTED.

I HAVE
PATIENTS
WAITING
FOR ME IN
AMERICA.

SO...

...YOU
ARE
LEAVING
JAPAN?



WHAT?

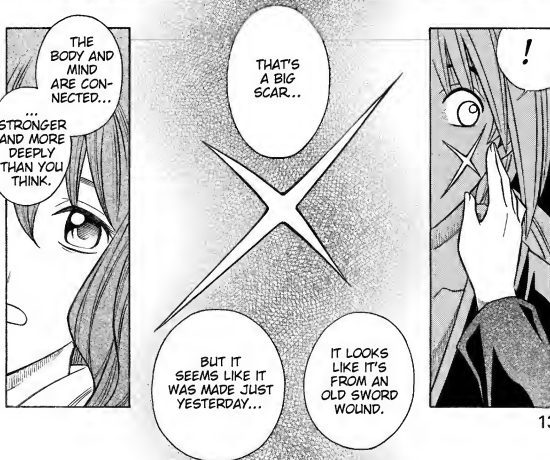
IT'S
NOT
JUST
ME.

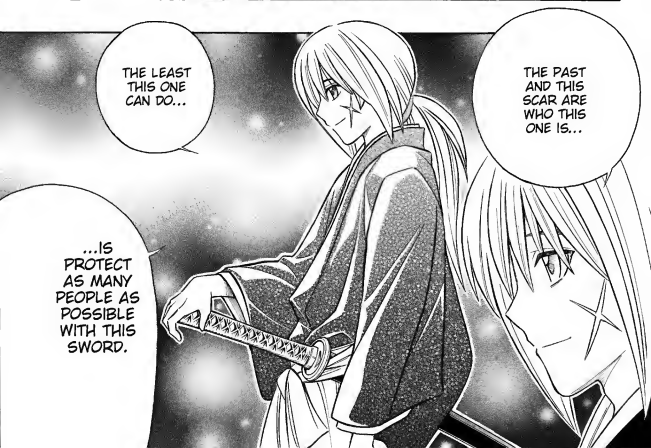
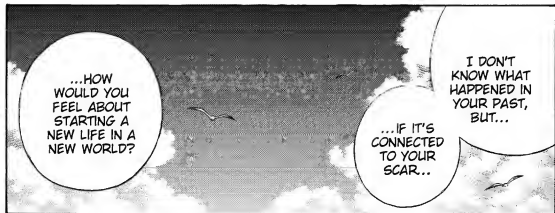
IT MAKES ME
FEEL LIKE
YOU'LL BE
HERE TO GREET
ME THE NEXT
TIME I
COME...

I'M
GLAD
YOU
ARE
SEEING
ME
OFF.





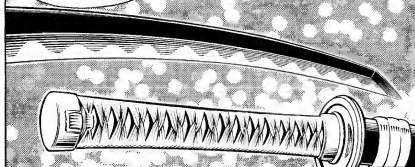




...THEN THAT IS A
FITTING LIFE FOR
SOMEONE CARRYING
A NON-LETHAL
SWORD.

IF THE
SWORD IS A
SAMURAI'S
SOUL...

YOU'RE
RIGHT.



MY ADVICE
AS A
DOCTOR...

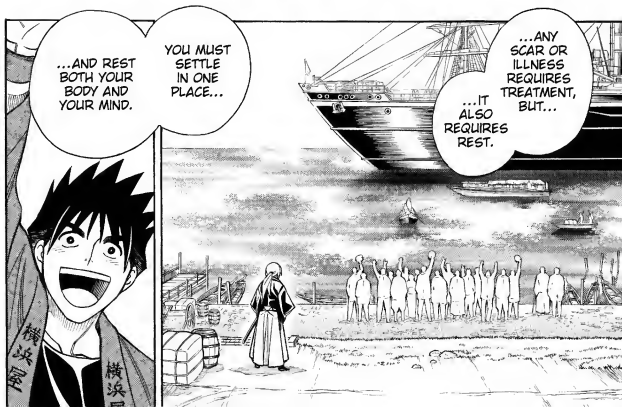
ONE
LAST
THING.



...AND REST
BOTH YOUR
BODY AND
YOUR MIND.

YOU MUST
SETTLE
IN ONE
PLACE...

...ANY
SCAR OR
ILLNESS
REQUIRES
TREATMENT,
BUT...
...IT
ALSO
REQUIRES
REST.





WELL
THEN...



ALL
RIGHT...

THIS
ONE WILL
KEEP THAT
IN MIND.



...PLEASE
STOP FOR
THEM.

IF YOU MEET
ANYBODY
IN YOUR
WANDERINGS
WHO CALLS
OUT FOR
YOU...

LONG AGO...



TMP

AND
...

AT THE
CONCLUSION
OF THOSE
TURBULENT
TIMES, HE
DISAPPEARED,
LEAVING ONLY
HIS LEGEND
BEHIND.



...DURING A
TURBULENT TIME IN
KYOTO THERE WAS A
PATRIOT KNOWN AS
HITOKIRI BATTOSAI.
HE SLAYED MEN AS
IF HE WAS CARNAGE
INCARNATE, AND WITH
HIS BLOOD-SOAKED
SWORD HE SLASHED
OPENED THE MEIJI
ERA.



TOKYO, IN
THE 11TH
YEAR OF
THE MEIJI
ERA...

...THE REAL
STORY
OF THIS
ADVENTURE
BEGAN
FIVE DAYS
LATER.

Continued in Act One...

FREE TALK 1

•It's been a while, Watsuki here.

It's been over one cycle of the Chinese zodiac since *Rurouni Kenshin: Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story* ended. I never dreamed I'd be writing another widely debated author's note again. Just to remind you, this note is simply a bonus. Not reading it won't affect your understanding of the actual manga, so to you readers who didn't like it or feel it's unnecessary, please feel free to skip it. Please.

•What led me to write *Rurouni Kenshin: Restoration and Act Zero*? In one word, because a live-action feature film was scheduled for release. Then why did you agree to a live-action feature film? Basically, Watsuki never turns down an offered project. Drama CDs, anime, games, novels, etc. I throw out suggestions and opinions, and then discuss them. Some offers don't pan out, but they are never turned away at the door. The one exception was an offer to turn it into a pachinko game. I turned it down simply because *Rurouni Kenshin* is a children's manga, so an over-18 medium was a bit... And because I'm just not a big fan of pachinko.

•The first offer for a live-action feature film came soon after the original serialization ended. It fizzled out even before we had any real discussions, so I honestly believed a live-action film was never going to happen. But three years ago, I received another offer. We discussed it at great length and it finally came to fruition.

Then Sasaki-san, my editor at the time and *Weekly Shonen Jump's* previous editor-in-chief, made a comment.

Sasaki-san: Now that the film's set to be made, you gotta start up *Kenshin* again, Wakky.

Watsuki: Huh?! (See author's comment)

Wife: Maybe you should?

So after some chaotic back and forth, I took up the pen again. But to be honest, Watsuki personally always harbored a desire to "write *Kenshin* again." A manga that to this day gets many requests for a sequel and remains loved ten-plus years after its conclusion. I always felt that if I was ever given the opportunity to meet those expectations, I would. When the editorial staff and I came to a head at the end of serialization, Sasaki-san understood Watsuki's intentions and saw that I was at my limit physically and came to my defense. (Something similar is depicted in *Bakuman*, but this was for real.) I truly meant it when I said "I will never write *Kenshin* again." It was out of respect and appreciation for the readers to end a popular title while it was still popular. But when the live-action feature become a reality, it was time to lift the ban. An opportunity to write *Rurouni Kenshin* for longtime readers and potential new readers is what made me grab my pen again.

•What I was first told in making a live-action film was "unlike in anime and games, a live-action film belongs to the director and not the author." I see. Anime, games, and manga basically entail "creating" and "drawing." A live-action film entails "acting" and "filming." They are fundamentally different. I was a complete outsider, so I was only involved during the script-writing phase (writing the first half of the script, then checking the second half of the script they wrote), but I was told the script could be changed at the discretion of the director. A live-action film truly belongs to the director.

•Watsuki considers adaptations of his own work to be "family." The creator is the parent and the manga is the child. Anime, games, or novels born from the manga are grandchildren. Grandchildren have their own parents, namely their producers. From the grandchildren's perspective, the author is their grandfather. It's not right for a grandfather to constantly interfere with his grandchildren's upbringing so he basically leaves it up to their parents. But when the grandchildren are neglected or raised in an environment where they are not loved, the grandfather, as the head of the family, will step in verbally and at times physically.

So this live-action film is like a child adopted by another family. Not that I won't put in a word or two, but it is the director's job, as head of that family, to put his body on the line. You can do it, director!!

•What I recommend about the *Rurouni Kenshin* film is its "feel." Thanks to the hard work of the entire production crew, the fantastical world of manga has been brilliantly adapted to a live-action film. The actors' performances, the costume designs, the amazing locations that make you say "I didn't know Japan still had sights that remind us of the good old Meiji-era," and high-end sets that are just as amazing. I can go on and on. A real-life world of *Rurouni Kenshin* is truly there. And the other thing that I have to mention is the action scenes. Thanks to the work of the sword teachers, the actors' performances, and particularly Takeru Sato's (who plays Kenshin) Kenshin-like speed, it turned out to be very realistic. Watsuki was by and large pleased (of course, as the creator, I'm biased). If I was left wanting more, I believe it would've been due to the shortcomings of the creator and the original work itself. For example, if the original work had been more popular there would have been an overflow of love from both the creators and the viewers and in turn done better at the box-office. The budget for the production would've been increased that much more. To be quite frank, it's difficult to create any good work of art without love or a product without expenses. That's what was missing. That's what I mean by shortcomings.

•What led me to writing *Kenshin* once again after ten-plus years all started with this live-action film. If any of you have any doubts, please go watch it.

FREE TALK 2

RUROUNI KENSHIN RESTORATION

•So then I was set to write *Kenshin* again. But there was a major issue: where and what do I write? First, the "where." Currently, Watsuki works with *Jump SQ*. But when taking into consideration promotion for the film, *Weekly Shonen Jump*, the original magazine the manga was published in and the highest circulated magazine in the country, was more desirable. However, with the current series and new writers as *Shonen Jump's* priority, there was only room for a one-shot. It was such a great opportunity that I wanted to at least write enough for a graphic novel and reach as many readers as possible. After much discussion, it was decided to run the one-shot in *Weekly Shonen Jump*, and a short series in *SQ*.

•Next up was "What do I write?" In terms of the short series for *SQ*, I knew the readers most likely wanted the Hokkaido arc that ended as a rough draft. However, the conclusion of the theme was the main reason the serial ended in the first place. Without an idea for a new theme, I couldn't write the Hokkaido arc, much less as a sequel with Kenshin as the main character. There was just no way... The next idea I came up with was a sequel about the next generation. A story about Yahiko, who takes over the Sakabato or combining Kenshin's child Kenji with Yahiko's child Shinya as 'Ken - Shin.' But that wouldn't be a story about **Kenshin**. It would be acceptable as a continuation of *Rurouni Kenshin: Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story*, but it wasn't suitable for *Restoration*... If a sequel was difficult how about a prequel instead? A prequel would allow for more flexibility. But the story would take place before Kenshin meets his friends. In other words, it wouldn't be possible for most of the major characters to make an appearance. The look of the short series would've been a bit skimpy. In fact, a structure where Kenshin is the only pre-existing character was more suitable for the one-shot. The last idea I came up with was a parallel story. Many ideas and scenarios were rejected during the script-writing phase of the movie. One of mine that was rejected was a thirty-week story I envisioned before *Rurouni* was published. A story based on a template so to speak. It would have been worthy of another *Kenshin* story and also in line with promoting the film. That is how *Restoration* was born. By the way, the novel version that will go on sale around the same time is based on Kurosaki Sensei's rejected idea.

•Watsuki's view of the parallel story.

Honestly, Watsuki does not disapprove of parallel stories. Maybe it's because I'm an avid reader of American comics where parallel worlds are common, but also because to me anime, games, novels, and live-action film adaptations are all parallels.

A parallel is "another" or "a separate" story and not a fake. I consider it as a pleasant gimmick that allows you to enjoy a piece of work in a different form. One thing you can't do is change the character's foundation. If you do, that would make it fake. And fake is not okay.

Parallels are okay as long as the characters remain fascinating. Kenshin and the other characters could be in school or fight dragons in a fantasy world and it would still be okay. (Although it would be very difficult.) Perhaps there is no parallel that would top the original, in this case *Rurouni Kenshin: Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story*. But it'd be a shame to reject all parallels outright. I think it's great to passionately love the original, but refusing to recognize anything else is a shame. Please enjoy a parallel world that is not possible in reality, a beautiful trick only made possible through creativity.

• Various topics about *Rurouni Kenshin: Resoration* will be featured in the next volume where the story will conclude. It'd be great if you could take another look at it...

RUROUNI KENSHIN: ACT ZERO

• As I was about to write the prequel, the following thoughts ran through my mind. 1) To make sure current *Weekly Shonen Jump* readers that have never read *Kenshin* would enjoy it. 2) To make sure existing readers would enjoy it. 3) To fill in the gaps of one element I missed. 4) Include an element I never included before. 5) Make sure to tie the ending into the First Act.

To address #1, I narrowed down the pre-existing characters to Kenshin, the main character, and made it easy to read by choosing a familiar story structure. I also made an effort to include elements of comedy.

For #2, I connected Kenshin's flashback scene in the middle with the spread at the end. I chose characters that were included in the cover of the complete collection.

With #3, I elaborated on the common question of "Why would Kenshin, who wandered for ten years, suddenly stop wandering in the First Act?" Elder notices Kenshin's deep, unhealed emotional scar. Her kind advice has a slight effect on Kenshin, thus becoming the motivation for his behavior in the First Act. Something like that.

#4 was, to put it bluntly, a Westerner. Surprisingly, there were no Western characters in *Rurouni Kenshin*. Even though it was an era of modernization and Westernization... That is why it was set in Yokohama's foreign settlement. I collected numerous materials on my research trip there in the spring. I regret not being able to introduce the Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery.

And as for #5, I used a recurring narration for this. Oh, the number of times I've written that narration...

• I struggled and struggled to decide on the above five points for this one-shot. Just when I had no clue what to do, when I was in the doldrums, I had an opportunity to eat with my very first editor, Sasaki-san. The subject of this one-shot came up while in a cab to the restaurant and we started talking. We came up with the framework in only fifteen minutes. I was reminded that Kenshin would not have been possible without him. Watsuki still has a lot to learn.

CHARACTER CREATION

UNTOLD STORIES PART 55

PEOPLE OF ACT ZERO

•Elder = Peaberry

At first glance she seems like a gimmicky character, but she is the end result of a long period of planning.

First off, we needed a heroine for Kenshin to save. In addition, a doctor who gives Kenshin advice was necessary. We also needed to fulfill the criteria of including a Western character. A character pursued by the bad guys as well. Just when I was about to lose it, thinking "Can we really include all these characters?!" I had an opportunity to share a ride with novelist/supervisor Kurosaki Sensei, and it naturally led to a discussion. He made the bold suggestion of "combining" them. After much struggle, Elder was the character I came up with. By the way, the idea of a pretty girl in a mask concealing her sex was Kurosaki Sensei's. A lot of progress seems to be made while in a car...

A kind and earnest girl who everybody would like once her identity is revealed and since the mask is gimmicky she had to be somewhat plain. I didn't really have a specific motif for her design. I chose a trendy soft wavy hairstyle. Considering the look when lined up alongside Kenshin when in disguise and the setting, she is rather small. Somewhere in between Tsubame and Misao. I took the name Elder from a medicinal herb. She is a distant relative (not acquainted) of Hildegard Peaberry who appears in *Embalming*, which Watsuki is currently working on.



•Asahiyama Dankichi

My initial thought was for him to be a soldier and the lover or older brother of a heroine. Once Elder was decided on as a character, he was no longer a major character. He instead was reborn as a character familiar with the settlement, helpful during travels, one of Elder's few allies and guide.

Perhaps due to him being a macho rickshawman, he ended up almost overshadowing the main character even during the early stages, so I ended up having to reduce his role. It's a pity.

I took his last name from a mountain back in my hometown. And since he pulls a car, his first name had to be Dankichi. His design was impromptu. I regret that his face and hairstyle are slightly different from frame to frame.

•Espiral = Rotación

Plays the role of the (villain) Western character. How about Kenshin vs. a Western sword-style? That is how he came about.

He was initially more of a rival character than a villain, living in the West where the sword had become obsolete, and thus wanting deeply to fight a samurai. A man with a kind of resignation to dying and an obsession with the sword. In the end, he mends his ways after being saved by Elder and returns back home with Elder as her bodyguard. That how I imagined him at first, but... He would have taken eight pages in the epilogue, about 1/6th of the entire page count. I just didn't have enough pages!

As a result, he ended up being the kind of villain you see in the story. Although I believe a simple villain was better for a one-shot, it's a pity in a different sense from Dankichi. His name is Spanish for "spiral," and all his technical moves are related to that word. Basically, his design is the opposite of Kenshin. Short black hair, white top and black leggings, as well as a long glove on his right arm to emphasize his dominant hand.



Rurouni
Kenshin

—RESTORATION—

RURONI KENSHIN: RESTORATION VOL. 1
SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

Translation/Joe Yamazaki
Touch-up Art & Lettering/Steve Dutro
Design/Kam Li
Editors/Pancha Diaz, Alexis Kirsch

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RURONI KENSHIN: RESTORATION is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic and cartoon violence.

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